

Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta

Annual Report 2006-2007



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CHAIR'S EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On behalf of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta, I am truly pleased to introduce this report on the Council's activities and accomplishments from April 1, 2006 to March 31, 2007.

Throughout the year, Council members strove to increase the recognition of seniors as one of Alberta's most valuable resources. The 20th Annual Seniors' Week provided a special opportunity to recognize seniors' contributions as we step into Alberta's second century. During the remainder of the year, Council members remained busy as they continued to build their understanding of both seniors' concerns and the programs and services that are working well in our communities. They did this by:

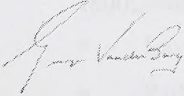
- attending almost 140 meetings, conferences and events in 33 Alberta communities,
- touring 26 seniors' facilities,
- hosting two public consultations,
- partnering with the Alberta Council on Aging to complete and report on a survey and consultation with seniors' centres on funding,
- receiving four presentations,
- developing and distributing six publications, and
- planning for Seniors' Week 2007, which will take place from June 4 to 10.

The Council's recommendations, resulting from these interactions, can be found on pages 6 to 8 of this document.

The Council has successfully managed a number of transitions during the past year. On May 4, 2006, during the Council's Executive Committee elections, Diane Caleffi was named vice-chair and Bill Forbes was named member-at-large. In September, Harjit Rai was welcomed to his first meeting as a Council member and in December, new Council member Laurie Lyckman attended her first meeting. At the end of December, Janet Tomalty, representing the North East Region, and Jim Acton, representing the Edmonton and Area Region, completed their terms on the Council and on January 23, 2007, Raymond Prins, MLA for Lacombe-Ponoka finished his term as chair. I join the other members of the Council in acknowledging their many valued and varied contributions over the years.

As you review this report, I urge you to consider the many ways in which we can work together to continue to be responsive to seniors' needs. We each have a role to play in making sure that our seniors are able to step confidently into their futures, fully enjoying the Alberta advantage they were instrumental in creating.

Sincerely,



George VanderBurg,

MLA for Whitecourt – Ste. Anne and Chair, Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta

Vision

To increase the recognition of seniors as one of Alberta's most valuable resources.

Mission

To improve the quality of life of Alberta seniors by fostering an environment of understanding within Government and the general public, of aging and the needs of older people.

Values

The Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta, as a communication link between the Government of Alberta and our senior citizens, represents them with integrity, accountability and respect. Through collaboration, the Council strives to assist seniors to live life to the fullest.

Mandate

The Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta serves as a communication link between Alberta's seniors and the Government of Alberta. The Council consults with seniors and also provides information to seniors and government. Through collaboration, the Council strives to assist seniors to live life to the fullest.

CONSULTATIONS, TOURS AND PRESENTATIONS

Members of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta share information and gather feedback by:

- hosting consultations and quarterly meetings throughout the province,
- working closely with seniors and seniors' organizations in their communities, and
- touring seniors' facilities (i.e. housing and long-term care facilities and seniors' centres).

Based on these interactions, the Council makes **recommendations** to the government on the legislation, policies and programs affecting Alberta's senior citizens. The Council also makes **resolutions** to enhance its own efforts to serve as an effective communication link between Alberta's seniors and the Government of Alberta.

Consultation on Seniors' Centres Funding

In late 2006, the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta and the Alberta Council on Aging worked together to learn about the financial status of seniors' centers in Alberta. Information was gathered through a survey mailed to all centres in the province and consultation sessions to which all centres were invited.

More than 50 per cent of the seniors' centres in the province participated in this consultation by completing and returning questionnaires and/or attending consultation sessions. This participation rate resulted in a clear picture of the financial situations that some Alberta seniors' centres enjoy and those that some find challenging.

A report on this consultation has been prepared for review by the Minister and is expected to be issued in 2007-2008.

Public Consultations

In 2006-2007, the Council initiated two public consultations to explore the full range of issues and solutions affecting seniors in different regions:

- on September 11, 2006, **28 individuals attended** a consultation session in Hinton hosted by the Council. Participants included: elected officials, representatives from seniors' clubs and organizations and representatives from health care, home care and housing providers.
- on December 11, 2006, in Red Deer, Council members consulted with **representatives from 18 seniors' centers, agencies and other service providers and six elected officials** from the area, including Victor Doerksen, MLA for Red Deer South. This consultation was held in conjunction with the Council's December 2006 quarterly Council meeting in Red Deer.

Separate reports on each of these consultations have been prepared, presented to the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports and distributed to all participants and local Members of the Legislative Assembly. They are available online at:

www.seniors.gov.ab.ca/services_resources/advisory_council/public_consultation/index.asp

Tours

On September 12, 2006, in conjunction with their quarterly meeting in Hinton, members of the Council broke into four groups to **tour 14 seniors' centres and seniors' housing facilities in Edson, Hinton, Grande Cache and Jasper**. They visited:

- Big Horn Golden Age Club (Grande Cache)
- Edson and District Old Time Recreation Centre
- Edson Healthcare Centre
- Good Samaritan Mountain View Court (Hinton)
- Grande Cache General Hospital
- Hinton Friendship Centre
- Hinton Good Companions
- Jasper Seniors Society
- Lions Sunset Manor (Hinton)
- Parkland Lodge (Edson)
- Pine Grove Senior Citizens Manor (Jasper)

- Pine Valley Lodge (Hinton)
- Seton General Hospital (Jasper)
- Whispering Pines Lodge (Grande Cache)

On December 11, 2006, in conjunction with their quarterly meeting in Red Deer, members of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta **toured 12 seniors' facilities in Red Deer, Lacombe, Ponoka and Rimbey**. They visited:

- Bethany CollegeSide (Red Deer)
- Club Sierra at Aspen Ridge (Red Deer)
- Golden Leisure Lodge (Ponoka)
- Kozy Korner (Lacombe)
- Lacombe Lodge (Lacombe)
- Legacy Place (Ponoka)
- Michener Centre (Red Deer)
- Parkland Manor (Rimbey)
- Ponoka Northcott Care Centre
- Rimbey & District Drop Inn Centre
- Rimbey Hospital and Care Centre
- The Manor at Royal Oak Village (Lacombe)

Presentations to the Council

In conjunction with their quarterly meetings, the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta invites experts to make presentations on topics of concern to seniors and seniors' service providers. These presentations enable Council members to enhance their own understanding of the challenges facing seniors and what is working well. Over the past year, the Council has received four presentations.

On **May 3, 2006**, during the **quarterly meeting in Edmonton**, the Council heard from:

- Ron Crossley, Lorne Stuart, Pat Marshall and Doris Kibermanis of the Persons with Developmental Disabilities Central Alberta Community Board, which is responsible for the provision of supports, services and funding to adults with developmental disabilities who live in Central Alberta.
- Diana Anderson and Jeannette Vatter of the Alberta Council on Aging, a registered charity with more than 4,000 individual members and 400 organizational members

(seniors' groups and agencies). The Alberta Council on Aging is the province's only provincial non-government umbrella organization representing seniors.

- Bruce Starlight, Senior Manager of Alberta Seniors and Community Supports' Aboriginal Relations and Initiatives, who provided a cross-cultural awareness seminar.

During the **September 11-13 quarterly meeting in Hinton**, the Council heard from:

- **Kurt Schreiner, Acting Director, Planning and Research Branch, Alberta Seniors and Community Supports**, on the ministry's work: with other ministries on authority to enforce the continuing care standards and on seniors' transportation, World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, a grant to Seniors Connect and on researching why people retire.

Ongoing Consultations with Seniors and Service Providers

In addition to the consultations and tours initiated by the Council, individual Council members attended almost 140 other meetings, conferences and events during the year to gather and share information. A full list of the organizations the Council met with is included in this report as Appendix B.

KEY CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As a communication link between the Government of Alberta and our province's senior citizens, the Council hears about **challenges** of major concern to our aging population and **community solutions** that are working well. Based on what it has heard, the Council makes recommendations to the Government of Alberta, which are intended to improve the quality of life of Alberta seniors. The Council also makes resolutions to enhance its own effectiveness in pursuing its vision.

This section of the annual report highlights the recommendations that the Council has drafted in response to challenges and solutions that seniors and seniors' service providers raised repeatedly during the past year. The Council recognizes that there remain ongoing issues relating to seniors' facility staffing, elder abuse, affordable housing, transportation and pensions, all of which affect the quality of seniors' lives. Appendix A of this report lists the resolutions the Council has made to enhance its own efforts to serve as an effective communication link between Alberta's seniors and the government.

Community

- 1.1 THAT the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports work with the federal government to **ensure seniors' pensions are indexed to the real cost of living** in the province.
- 1.2 THAT the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports meet with the Ministers of Health and Wellness and International, Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Relations to **discuss ways that the isolation, home care and health care needs of at-home off-reserve senior aboriginals** can be met.

Discussion: Seniors on fixed incomes are often challenged in meeting increases in costs. It is important to ensure that all financial benefits they receive, including federal and provincial pensions and government contributions to seniors' benefits and accommodation costs are increased in parallel with increases in seniors' cost of living.

Council members have noted that some off-reserve frail Metis and Aboriginal seniors face isolation and encounter barriers in accessing the support they need to experience the best possible quality of lives in their own homes.

Health and Housing

- 2.1 THAT the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports review the seniors **housing funding formula** to reflect today's resident profile and supportive living structures.

- 2.2 THAT the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports develop a means of paying institutions for **developing and delivering staff training** for those providing services in seniors' housing facilities.
- 2.3 THAT the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports work with the Minister of Health and Wellness to **ensure regional health authorities deal with the bias demonstrated by the difference in salaries** regional health authorities cover for staff employed by seniors' housing facilities and community caregivers versus those they pay their own trained staff in equivalent positions.
- 2.4 THAT the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports work with the Minister of Health and Wellness to **implement the new standards related to communications between regional health authorities and those managing housing for seniors.**

Discussion: Administrators of seniors' housing facilities continue to express concern about the fact that the cost of providing appropriate care is outstripping the funding they receive. Additional funding is needed to reflect: the complexity of care needed by many residents, capital renovations and expansions and increasing operating costs.

Council members have noted that many seniors' housing facilities experience considerable difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified staff. This has an impact on the quality and consistency of resident care that can be delivered. The low salaries that facilities are able to offer in some cases are lower than those offered by fast food outlets. This hampers successful recruitment. This is compounded by the difficulties associated with developing and delivering training, without adequate funding, and instances when well-qualified experienced staff are hired away by regional health authorities offering higher wages.

Administrators of some seniors' housing facilities have expressed difficulty in establishing timely effective communication with their regional health authorities, whose size, complexity and bureaucracy they find difficult to navigate. There is a need to establish solid working relationships between small facility administrators and their key regional health authority contacts to ensure that communications about requirements and funding are clear and timely. While regional health authorities' care standards require them to identify a single contact person for each resident in care, implementation of this standard has not yet occurred.

Health & Wellness

- 3.1 THAT the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports work with his federal colleagues to explore a **tax deduction or credit for seniors who participate in registered fitness activities.**

Discussion: Allowing seniors to claim the costs associated with participation in fitness activities from their taxable incomes would encourage them to stay fit and reward them for staying active. This approach would help to avoid the costs to the health care system associated with sedentary lifestyles.

PUBLICATIONS

The Seniors Advisory Council undertakes research projects, and writes and distributes reports and the *Update* newsletter. Through these activities, the Council increases communication of timely, accurate information for seniors and seniors' service providers.

During the past year, the Council produced these six publications:

- **2005-2006 Annual Report**, to the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports. This report summarized the Council's consultations, tours and presentations during the year; key challenges and recommendations; communications with seniors and their service providers; Seniors' Week 2005 and the annual budget and expenditures.
- **Events Planning Guide** for the 2006 Seniors' Week. This 24-page guide included information about the year's theme; the winner of the 2005 *Most Creative Event Contest*; ideas for community, intergenerational, life-long learning, active living and artworks events; and suggestions for event planning and promotion.
- **Update** newsletter - *Seniors' Week 2006 Special Edition*. This eight-page newsletter included greetings from the Premier; the Honourable Yvonne Fritz, Minister of Seniors and Community Supports and Ray Prins, MLA, Lacombe-Ponoka and the Chair of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta. It also featured information about the June 5 launch of Seniors' Week 2006 at the Calgary Zoo, the 73 municipalities that had officially proclaimed Seniors' Week as of April 28, the Minister's Senior's Service Awards program and World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.
- The September 2006 report on the Consultation with Seniors and Seniors' Service Providers in the Hinton Area including Edson, Jasper and Grande Cache.
- The December 2006 report on the Consultation with Seniors and Seniors' Service Providers in the Red Deer Area including Lacombe, Ponoka and Rimbey.

SENIORS' WEEK 2006

Each year since 1986, a committee of Seniors Advisory Council members has spearheaded the development of Seniors' Week to:

- recognize and honour seniors through special events across Alberta,
- highlight the positive contributions that seniors are making in their communities, and
- promote healthy attitudes about aging and seniors.

The 2006 theme, *Stepping Into Alberta's Second Century*, was chosen to reflect on our province's Centennial, to emphasize how our seniors helped to build the Alberta we enjoy today and acknowledge how their involvement continues to shape our economy, communities and families. This year, the Council distributed 2,500 copies of the 24-page *Event Planning Guide*, promotional poster and proclamation to stakeholders including volunteer organizations, service clubs, businesses, schools and all levels of government. They were all encouraged to honour the past, present and future contributions of Alberta's seniors. An on-line event registration system was made available and events were promoted via the website.

During the 20th Annual Seniors' Week, held June 5 to 11, Albertans throughout our province paid tribute to seniors at events, which were detailed in the Council's special Seniors' Week 2006 edition of the *Update* newsletter.

Most Creative Event Contest 2006

In 2006, the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta hosted the eighth annual *Most Creative Event Contest* and encouraged organizations and communities to celebrate the active role seniors play in Alberta and showcase their many talents. Judging was based on the originality of the event and the number, age range and involvement of participants in the event.

The Foothills Foundation in High River received first prize for their *Stepping into Alberta's Second Century with the Stars* event. For two weeks before the event, residents at three lodges walked a special route and earned a star for every kilometre traveled. Then, the total distance traveled was calculated and a large star was made, using the small stars collected for every kilometre walked. On the day of the celebration, residents from the three lodges met with students from Spitzee Elementary School and seniors from the High River Hospital and Nursing Home and two adult day support programs. Everyone enjoyed the dancing demonstrations, meeting each other throughout the afternoon and the cake served by the students.

Second prize went to the Veiner Centre in Medicine Hat for their *Mural Legacy* project and the Shouldice Lodge in Calgary captured third prize for their *It's Never Too Late to Learn* event.

SUMMARY OF 2006-2007 BUDGET AND EXPENSES

	Budget	Actual
Salary, wages and employee benefits	\$141,000	\$134,341
Supplies and services (travel, accommodation, supplies and contracts)	132,000	117,301
Other expenditures (MLA fees and expenses)	15,000	18,335
Total	\$288,000	\$269,977

APPENDIX A. COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS

Based on what Council members have heard and experienced during the past year, they have made a number of **resolutions to enhance their own effectiveness in pursuing the Council's vision**. This appendix highlights resolutions the Council developed in its ongoing efforts to continuously improve its operations.

Community

- 1.1 THAT members of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta continue to monitor seniors abuse issues by attending forums and conferences.
- 1.2 THAT the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta form a subcommittee on seniors abuse issues so that the Council can develop recommendations dealing with preventative measures.

Discussion: Council members continue to hear about issues related to abuse of seniors. A subcommittee should be formed as outlined in the Council's business plan.

- 1.3 THAT the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta explore the transferability of transportation and recreation passes from one municipality to another.

Discussion: Council members discussed the advantages of enabling seniors who hold a transportation or recreation pass in their home community being able to use that pass when visiting other communities in the province. This would enhance seniors' independence and help them sustain active lifestyles when traveling.

Education and Communication

- 2.1 THAT members of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta monitor the Ministry's production of materials in languages other than English.

Discussion:

Council members have noted that some seniors in the province have difficulty reading and understanding English language printed materials. While the increased costs associated with translation and producing print materials in a variety of languages are acknowledged, having materials available in French, Spanish and other languages commonly spoken and read by Alberta seniors would be invaluable in helping seniors understand and access the programs and services available to them. Council members wish to monitor the production of translated materials by other parts of the Ministry before forming a recommendation on this issue.

APPENDIX B. MEETINGS, CONFERENCES AND OTHER EVENTS

This Appendix results from Council members' commitment to meet with groups or attend events throughout the province during the last year. In total, Council members met with groups in 33 Alberta communities over the past 12 months.

Communities	Event/Groups with whom Council met
	Alberta Affordable Housing Task Force
	Housing Task Force meeting
	The Greying Nations Conference
Bassano	Playair Lodge ~ visitation and distribution of information material
Beaverlodge	Seniors Week Celebrations - Amisk Court
Big Lakes	Seniors Wellness Information Fair
Bonanza	Bonanza Fellow Pioneer Homestead Society
Brooks	Brooks House Centre ~ visitation and distribution of information materials
	Newbrook Lodge ~ visitation and distribution of information materials
	Orchard House ~ visitation and distribution of information materials
Calgary	Aboriginal Seniors Support Project
	Aging Adult Resiliency Project
	Alberta Elder Abuse Awareness Network
	Annual General Meeting - Calgary Chapter Alberta Association of Gerontology
	Arthritis Conference
	A Way Forward - Promising Approaches to Abuse Prevention
	CCIS Seniors' Award Selection Committee Meeting
	Calgary Area Members Meeting (2)
	Calgary Catholic Immigration Society ~ "A Taste of Asia"
	Calgary Cooperative Memorial Society Meeting
	Calgary Family and Community Support Services ~ Information Meeting
	Calgary Health Region Seniors' Health Forum
	Canadian Association of Retired Persons, Calgary Chapter, Annual General Meeting
	Community Mediation Calgary Society Meeting
	Connecting Seniors Cultural Festival
	Delirium - A Medical Emergency Session
	Dreambuilders Conference
	ElderNET Calgary
	Father Lacombe Care Centre
	Friends of Seniors Windup
	Intercare at Millrise ~ visitation viewing and distribution of material

Communities	Event/Groups with whom Council met
Calgary, contd.	Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta Conference
	Little Mr. & Miss Philippines Coronation Night - Young Once Seniors Association
	Masterpiece Living ~ new property viewing and distribution of materials
	Mayfair Care Centre Tour
	McKenzie Towne Care Centre - tour
	Metis Resource Centre Seniors' Week Lunch
	Millrise Place Assisted Living Tour
	Multicultural Fiesta - Calgary Catholic Immigration Society and Downtown Friendship Centre
	Older Women's Long-Term Survival (OWLS) Program Meeting
	Orientation of New Council Member
	Patient/Family Involvement
	Peter Coyle Place - tour
	Post Fall Support: Enabling Seniors (Stable, Able and Strong)
	Retirement Residence Groups~ work safety - work healthy for PCA/HCA/LPN/RNs
	Senior Health Forum - Patient and Family Centred Care
	Senior Police Advisory Board Meeting
	Seniors Conference 2006 (Confederation Park Seniors Centre)
	Seniors' Housing Forum
	Seniors Information Fair
	Seniors Resource Fair and Seniors Awards
	Seniors Services Workshop
	Seniors Week Celebrations - Prince of Peace Campus
	Seniors Week Kickoff - Calgary Zoo
	Shawnee Lodge – tour
	Shouldice Lodge Most Creative Event Award Presentation
	Southwood Intercare Nursing Home
	Southwood Nursing Home Tour
	"Spring Tune Up" Health Fair
	We Care Dignity Health Care Ltd.
	Western Rocky View Community Development Society
	World Elder Abuse Awareness Day
Canmore	Bow River Lodge (2)
	Canmore General Hospital (2)
Carvel	Everglades Special Care Lodge (2)
Chestermere	Seniors Fair
Cremona	Gold & Silver Club (2)
Devon	Devon Hospital (Long-term Care and Acute Care)
	Discovery Place – The Heights

Communities	Event/Groups with whom Council met
Drumheller	Drumheller Health Care Centre visitation and material distribution Sunshine Lodge visitation and material distribution
Edmonton	Alberta Affordable Housing Task Force Business Plan Implementation Meeting Business Planning Meeting Capital Care ~ Dickensfield, dementia and long-term care evaluation Capital Care ~ Norwood, meet with new Administrator Central Park Lodge Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council Cultural Cues Edmonton Seniors Organizing Council ~ to discuss immigrant seniors Garneau Hall Glenrose Hospital Spotlight on Research Breakfast Grace Manor Home Care Contracted Agencies (RFP) Committee Meeting International Day of Older Persons Celebration - St. Michael's Health Group Meeting to Plan a Housing Seminar for Seniors Meeting with Minister for N.S. Miller Crossing Care Centre Most Creative Event Contest Meeting Quarterly Full Council Meeting Review of Implementation of Health Service Standards St. Andrews Centre Seniors Centres Funding Study Meeting (2) Seniors' Picnic at the Shaw Seniors Transportation Workshop Seniors Week Celebration - Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital Venta Care Centre
Enilda	Seniors Week Sit Down Fancy Luncheon
Fort Saskatchewan	Dr. Turner Lodge Visitation Fort Saskatchewan Health Centre Rivercrest Care Centre visit
Grande Prairie	Seniors Week Dinner and Dance - Golden Age Centre Seniors Luncheon and Social - Royal Canadian Legion Seniors Week Tea and Social Seniors Week Turn of the Century Tea and Social - Pioneer Lodge Seniors Week Visit - Wild Rose Manor

Communities	Event/Groups with whom Council met
High Prairie	Seniors Service Workshop
	Seniors Week Lunch and Bingo
High River	Foothills Foundation ~ Award Presentation of Most Creative Event Contest
	High River Hospital, Long-Term Care Floor
	Westwinds Lodge/Medicine Tree Manor Tour
Hythe	Hythe and District Pioneer Home Tour
Lamont	Lamont County Community Adult Learning Council Information Fair
	Lamont County Seniors Fair and Luncheon
Leduc	Extendicare Leduc (Long-term Care)
	Leduc Community Hospital Meeting and Tour
	Planeview Place Assisted Living Residence
	Salem Manor Society
McLennan	McLennan Hospital Assisted Living Wing Information Session
Nanton	Mosquito Creek Foundation/Silver Willow Lodge
Okotoks	Sandstone Lodge
Peace River	Sagitawa Friendship Society
	Workshop for Seniors
Rainbow Lake	Rainbow Lake Seniors
Silver Valley	Silver Valley/Savana Seniors
Spruce Grove	Seniors Fair – TransAlta Tri-Leisure Centre
St. Albert	Citadel Care Centre Tour
	St. Albert Seniors Fair and Silent Auction
Stony Plain	Meridian Foundation invitation by board and director to determine more accurately seniors' needs in Parkland County area.
	Seniors Inter-Agency Meeting
Strathmore	Strathmore Continuing Care visitation and material distribution
	Wheatland Housing visitation and material distribution
Thorhild	Information Fair - County of Thorhild
Viking	Viking Wellness Fair

APPENDIX C. COUNCIL MEMBERS' BIOGRAPHIES

The Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta is a government-appointed body. A Member of the Legislative Assembly, appointed by the Premier, chairs the Council and other members are appointed by Order-in-Council. They include one representative each from the Alberta Medical Association and Alberta universities and representatives of the six regions of the province. This regional structure, developed by the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta in 1997, maximizes the resources of the Council and the location of the Council members.

Currently, the 12 members of the Council are:

George VanderBurg

MLA, Whitecourt-St. Anne and Chair, Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta.



George VanderBurg was appointed chair of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta by the Premier in January 2007. He was elected to his first term as Member of the Legislative Assembly for Whitecourt-St. Anne in March 2001 and to his second term in November 2004.

He was appointed Minister of Government Services in April 2006 and then also appointed Acting Minister of Innovation and Science in August 2006. He held both positions until December 2006.

He has also served on several provincial committees, as the director of the Northlands Park Board and as chair of the Electrical Transmission Commission.

Prior to becoming the MLA for Whitecourt-St. Anne in 2001, George served for 15 years in municipal politics. He served as the Mayor of Whitecourt for almost nine years and spent six as a town councillor.

Over the years, Mr. VanderBurg, an active Rotarian, and his wife were successful owners and operators of various businesses in Northern Alberta. He was President of the Whitecourt Chamber of Commerce and was the recipient of the Chamber of Commerce president's award. Mr. VanderBurg has also been named Whitecourt's citizen of the year and been awarded the Alberta Chamber of Commerce small business of the year award.

Dr. David Belcher

Drayton Valley, Alberta Medical Association



Dr. David Belcher entered family practice in the UK after he received a medical degree from Cambridge University. In 1969, he moved with his wife and family to Drayton Valley, where he worked as a general practitioner until his retirement in September 2004.

Dr. Belcher serves as a member of the Committee on Continuing Care of the Alberta Medical Association and the Care of the Elderly Working Group of the Alberta College of Family Physicians.

He has also conducted short-term relief medical work in India and Africa. Since 1984, he has been extensively involved in the medical care of the elderly.

Dr. Belcher became a member of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta in 2002.

Diane Caleffi

Calgary, Calgary and Area Region



Diane Caleffi began her career with the Calgary Police Service as an executive secretary in the Field Operations and Tactical Support sections and with Olympic Security for the 1988 Olympic Winter Games. She now runs her own business providing executive and personal assistant services.

She has served as a member of Executive Women International, as a safety officer for Calgary West Little League, as a volunteer with the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter Turning Points Dinners and serves on a number of other boards and committees. She was a Centennial ambassador for Calgary West in 2005.

Currently, Mrs. Caleffi is a board member with the Calgary Health Region and sits on the Children's Service's Social Care Facilities Review Committee. She is also an advisory member for the Manor at Garrison Woods.

Mrs. Caleffi became a member of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta in 2004 and has held the positions of Member at Large and Vice Chair.

Jean Dreger

Calgary, Calgary and Area Region



Jean Dreger has worked with many boards and committees to serve seniors. She has been the chair of Health and Housing on the Mayor's Seniors Advisory Council and a board member for the Calgary Association of Gerontology. She is currently a member of the Family and Safety Council of the Calgary Health Region.

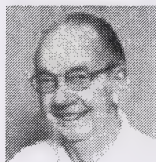
She has volunteered with many other groups including the Canadian Association of Retired Persons Advocacy Committee and the Elder Friendly Group through the University of Calgary Faculty of Social Work.

Ms. Dreger also wrote *A Voice for Seniors*, a column in the Calgary Herald, and she is a graduate of the Lutheran Hospital Ministry with a counseling certificate.

Ms. Dreger became a member of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta in 2004 and is a recipient of the Centennial Medal.

Clyde Elford

Calgary, Calgary and Area Region



Clyde Elford has shared his time with many organizations. He has served as president of several clubs, including the Canukeena Club, Probus Club and Food Executive club. He has also been a member of the Calgary Naval Veterans Association, Royal Canadian Legion, Kerby Centre, Red Cross and the Calgary White Hatter organization.

He worked with the 1988 Olympic Winter Games volunteer team and has used his public relations and marketing experience to assist organizations like SAIT through its Advisory Board of Marketing. Presently, he is a member of the Alberta Mental Health Review Panel.

Mr. Elford has been recognized for his service to the community with the Queen's Jubilee Medal and the Alberta Centennial Medal.

Mr. Elford became a member of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta in 2004.

Dr. Bill Forbes

Stony Plain, Edmonton and Area Region



Dr. Bill Forbes has worked in a variety of positions with seniors. As a member of a regional health authority, very involved with an education board, and through a variety of associations, he has met many older Albertans and understands their concerns.

Dr. Forbes has also served as president of three Canadian community colleges. In addition to his work with the council, he has volunteered with numerous community, provincial and national not-for-profit associations.

Dr. Forbes became a member of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta in 2004.

Dr. Brad Hagen

Lethbridge, Alberta's Universities



Dr. Brad Hagen has been interested in assisting others throughout his career, and his current research focuses on the well-being of older people.

Dr. Hagen's experience includes working as a staff nurse in psychiatry and psychogeriatrics, as an instructor for a nursing program and as a faculty member with the University of Victoria. He is now a tenured associate professor in the University of Lethbridge's School of Health Sciences.

Dr. Hagen's primary research interest is in the mental health of older persons. His research has examined informal caregiving of frail older persons, problem gambling and seniors, older men with prostate cancer and the use of psychotropic medications in long-term care facilities.

Dr. Hagen became a member of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta in 2005.

Maureen Hemingway Schloss

Edmonton, Edmonton and Area Region



Maureen Hemingway Schloss has supported many organizations in the Edmonton area, including the Greater Edmonton Foundation as vice chair.

She has also served on the boards of the Northern Alberta Children's Hospital Foundation, the Alberta Ballet Company and the Edmonton Opera. She is a past president of the Phoenix Theatre and Pilgrims Hospices board director.

Mrs. Hemingway Schloss is currently a director of the Fringe Theatre Company.

Mrs. Hemingway Schloss became a member of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta in 2004.

Laurie Lyckman

Carmangay, South Region



Laurie Lyckman is very familiar with issues important to seniors, their caregivers and families. Now the director of care for a seniors lodge, she is keenly interested in how best to improve the quality of life of seniors and how to help seniors understand the options and opportunities available to them.

Mrs. Lyckman also helps fundraise for several health foundations and has been an executive member of the Lodge Activity Coordinators Association of Alberta for 13 years.

In 2005, Mrs. Lyckman received an Alberta Centennial Medal for her contributions to the community.

Mrs. Lyckman became a member of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta in 2006.

Leonard Olson

High Prairie, North West Region



Leonard Olson brings a diversity of experiences to the council. Originally from northern Alberta, he completed his post-secondary education in Edmonton before working with the provincial government and the Northern Lakes College.

After retiring, Mr. Olson continued to serve on the High Prairie town council and started to work with Canada Post. He is currently in his fifth term with town council and his second term with the seniors council.

Mr. Olson became a member of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta in 2004.

Dawn Parent

Lacombe, Central Region



Dawn Parent has worked with several organizations, boards and commissions. She has also been a Lacombe town councilor for the past 18 years and has served on the Lacombe Foundation Board. Her work with the seniors and housing authority board and experiences caring for aging parents, sparked her interest in working with seniors.

After retiring from her account manager position with a national bank, Mrs. Parent entered the real estate sales business, where she continues to work. She is also a board member with the Persons with Development Disabilities central region.

Mrs. Parent became a member of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta in 2005.

Harjit S. Rai

Calgary, Calgary and Area Region



Harjit Rai is especially interested in assisting elderly people and believes seniors can be active and healthy community members.

Mr. Rai is also a strong supporter of cross-cultural relations. He served as a director for the Calgary Multicultural Centre and as president of the Sikh Society of Calgary. He remains actively involved with Calgary's Sikh Society and the Deshmesh Culture Centre.

Born and raised in India, Mr. Rai has worked in general insurance, life insurance and real estate fields. He has been a real estate broker in Calgary for more than 20 years.

Mr. Rai received an Alberta Centennial Medal for his commitment to the community.

Mr. Rai became a member of the Seniors Advisory Council for Alberta in 2006.

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